



OFFICIAL STUDY GUIDE 2001 EDITION



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COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM

III. Interpreting Your Scores

College score requirements for awarding credit vary from institution to institution. The College Board, however, recommends that colleges refer to the standards set by the American Council on Education (ACE). All ACE recommendations are the result of careful and periodic review by evaluation teams made up of faculty who are subject-matter experts and technical experts in testing and measurement. To determine whether you are eligible for credit for your CLEP scores, you should refer to the policy of the college you will be attending. The policy will state either the score or the percentile that is required to earn credit at that institution. Many colleges award credit at the score levels recommended by ACE. Many others use the 50th percentile. Some require scores that are higher or lower than these.

The pamphlet *What Your CLEP Score Means*, which you will receive with your score report, gives detailed information about interpreting your scores. A copy of the pamphlet is in Appendix B. A brief explanation appears below.

How CLEP Scores Are Computed

Your score report will show the total score for each CLEP exam you take. For the General Examinations, total scores fall between 200 and 800, and for the Subject Examinations between 20 and 80. For Subject Examinations, percentile ranks for scaled scores will be shown on the score report.

When your scores are computed, you receive one point for each correct answer. A percentage of the number of your incorrect answers is subtracted from this total to discourage random guessing. As a penalty for guessing, one-fourth of a point is subtracted for each five-choice question you answer incorrectly; one-third of a point is deducted for each incorrect answer to a four-choice question. There is no deduction for a question you do not answer. The resulting figure, called the formula score, is converted to a scaled score between 200 and 800 or between 20 and 80. The more questions you answer correctly, the more points you will earn toward a higher scaled score. This conversion makes scores earned on different forms and editions of the same CLEP examination comparable to one another.

How Essays Are Graded

The College Board arranges for college English professors to grade the essays written for the General Examination in English Composition. These carefully selected college faculty consultants represent the current curriculums being taught at two- and four-year institutions nationwide. The faculty consultants receive extensive training and thoroughly review the College Board scoring policies and procedures before grading the essays. Each essay is read and graded by two professors, the sum of the two grades is combined with the multiple-choice score, and the result is reported as a scaled score between 200 and 800. CLEP does not report separate scores for the multiple-choice and essay sections of the General Examination in English Composition because a 45-minute test is not considered extensive enough to assess reliably a candidate's writing skills for college credit. Although the format of the two sections is very different, both measure skills required for expository writing. Knowledge of formal grammar is necessary for the multiple-choice section, but the emphasis in the free-response section is on writing skills rather than grammar.

Optional essays for CLEP Composition and Literature Subject Examinations are evaluated and graded by the colleges that require them, rather than by ETS or the College Board. If you take an optional essay, it will be sent with a copy of your score report (which includes only the results of your multiple-choice test) to the institution you designate on your answer sheet.

You may opt not to have your score sent to a college until after you have seen it. In this case, your essay can still be sent to the college of your choice as long as you request a transcript within 90 days after you take the exam. Copies of essays are not held by ETS beyond 90 days or after they have been sent to an institution.